

THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER CODED FACTORS ON ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF NANDI
NORTH DISTRICT, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of gender coded factors (GCF) on academic achievement. The GCF considered in the study were: The influence of Socio-economic factors (SEF); The influence of Socio-cultural roles (SCR) and Gender influence (GI). The above three variables were independent variables whereas students academic achievement was the dependent variable. Student academic achievement was measured using mean scores of end of term examinations for the last four terms from the time of research in Mathematics, English and Kiswahili. These subjects were used because they are compulsory subjects in secondary schools in Kenya.

The study was done in four coeducational day secondary schools in Nandi North District. The research design used in this study was descriptive survey design. Cluster sampling and systematic random sampling were used to get the schools and student respondents respectively. Purposive sampling was used to get teacher respondents. A total of 179 students and 11 teachers participated in the study. Questionnaires administered to teachers and students in the schools were the main instruments for data collection. Data collected from questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics at an α of 0.05. All analysis was done using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) version 11.

Results showed that boys were better in mathematics despite a drop in performance in form four while girls performed better in English and Kiswahili. T-tests showed that the mean difference of boys and girls' performance was only statistically significant in Kiswahili. Chi-square tests showed a significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and academic achievement of all students. Gender influence on subject performance was stronger than the influence of frequency of performance of socio-cultural tasks, as poor performance in mathematics by girls was not equated to frequency of performance of Socio-cultural tasks.

Based on the results, the following are recommended. The government should lay down economic structures which aid in improving the economic status of its citizenry so as to reduce gender gaps in achievement arising due to poverty. Education planners should come up with policies which aid in addressing the educational needs of the disadvantaged

such as the girl child and the poor. Teachers should have a balanced view of all students and avoid favoritisms based on gender and socio-economic status. Parents should treat all children equally and provide their educational needs without gender bias.